

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP
SUBJECT: CODEL LEGGETT MEETING WITH GENERAL GAMASY

SUMMARY: GAMASY TOLD CODEL LEGGETT JULY 1 HE EXPECTED SOME F-5'S THIS YEAR BUT CONSIDERED PRICE VERY HIGH IN VIEW ORIGINAL QUOTATION. SOVIET PRESENCE IN AFRICA VERY REAL DANGER PARTICULARLY ETHIOPIA. CODEL SUGGESTED LARGE U.S. CORPS OF ENGINEERS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM, PERHAPS FUNDED BY SAUDIA ARABIA, TO STABILIZE SITUATION IN SOMALIA. GAMASY EXPECTS SOVIET POLITICAL MOVE AGAINST EGYPT WITHIN TWO YEARS. HE INSISTED EGYPTIAN MILITARY LOYAL AND ANTI-SOVIET. MEETING WENT WELL AND CODEL COMMENTED FAVORABLY ON GAMASY'S PROFESSIONALISM. CODEL HAS NOT CLEARED THIS MESSAGE. END SUMMARY.

1. CODEL LEGGETT MET WITH GAMASY FOR ONE HOUR JULY 1. DATT ATTENDED. MR. LEGGETT ASKED ABOUT GAMASY'S VISIT TO THE U.S., GAMASY SAID HE WOULD HAVE WARM MEMORIES FOR A LONG TIME. CODEL ALLOWED U.S. PUBLIC OPINION AFTER SADAT'S VISIT HAD CHANGED AND A RECENT POLL FOUND THAT 58 PERCENT OF AMERICANS FELT ORIGINAL BORDERS SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED AND ARAB LANDS RETURNED.

2. F-5'S. MR. LEGGETT ASKED ABOUT GAMASY'S VISIT TO NORTHROP CORPORATION, AND A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE
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F-5 PROGRAM FOR EGYPT (PEACE PYLON) FOLLOWED. GAMASY TOLD CODEL HE EXPECTED TO GET "SOME F-5'S THIS YEAR (1978)" BUT DID NOT SPECIFY THE NUMBER. GAMASY CONSIDERED "PRICE OF OVER \$600 MILLION" TO BE VERY HIGH IN VIEW ORIGINALLY QUOTED \$400 MILLION. YET, HE RECOGNIZED ORIGINAL COST DID NOT ESTIMATE ADD-ONS AND TRAINING COSTS. MR. LEGGETT CITED INFLATION AS A MAJOR FACTOR.

3. AFRICA. GAMASY STRESSED THAT SOVIET PRESENCE WAS A VERY REAL DANGER THROUGHOUT AFRICA. THEY WERE IN ETHIOPIA TO STAY PERHAPS THROUGH A CHANGE OF MENGISTU GOVERNMENT. HE AGREED WITH CODEL THAT BARRE SHOULD STAY OUT OF OGADEN, TURNING INSTEAD TO BUILDING HIS COUNTRY INTERNALLY. GAMASY SAID ETHIOPIA HAD PLANNED TO FINISH MILITARY OPERATIONS IN ERITREA BY END OF JULY, BUT HE DID NOT EXPECT THIS TO HAPPEN BECAUSE ERITREAN TOPOGRAPHY VERY DIFFICULT. HE EXPECTED , ULTIMATELY, SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT.

4. SOMALIA. MR. LEGGETT SUGGESTED CONCEPT FOR ASSISTANCE TO SOMALIA TO STABILIZE COUNTRY POLITICALLY AND, SHOW AN AMERICAN COMMITMENT. HE PROPOSED A LARGE CORPS OF ENGINEERS INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM ON THE MODEL OF SAUDI ARABIA TO COST TENS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS AND DEDICATED TO REBUILDING (NO WEAPONERY WOULD BE PROVIDED). MR. LEGGETT SUGGESTED SAUDI MONEY MIGHT FUND SUCH A VENTURE. GAMASY HAD SUGGESTED U.S. CONTRIBUTE SMALL ARMS TO SOMALIA AS A GESTURE, BUT HE RECOGNIZED "THE MANY RESTRICTIONS YOU HAVE" IN ARMS EXPORTS. GAMASY APPEARED TO HAVE SOME DIFFICULTY IDENTIFYING PROPOSAL AS MILITARY ASSISTANCE (CORPS OF ENGINEERS). HE FELT IT WAS BASICALLY ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. HE NEVER REALLY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IT MIGHT BE A SERIOUS SECRET

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INITIATIVE, ALTHOUGH HE DID AGREE THAT ANY INTERNAL SUPPORT FOR SOMALIA WOULD HELP.

5. GAMASY, IN PURSUING THE SUBJECT OF SOVIET ACTIVITY IN AFRICA, THOUGHT SOVIETS WOULD MAKE MOVE (PROBABLY POLITICALLY) AGAINST EGYPT WITHIN TWO YEARS. HE DENIED (WITH A LAUGH) THAT EGYPTIAN MILITARY MIGHT HARBOR SOME PRO-SOVIET FACTIONS. HE ELABORATED ON THE BAD EXPERIENCE THE EGYPTIANS HAD HAD WITH SOVIETS AND INSISTED MILITARY WERE ESSENTIALLY LOYAL AND ANTI-SOVIET.

6. ME SETTLEMENT. ASKED BY MR. LEGGETT TO ASSESS WHERE NEGOTIATIONS STOOD, GAMASY TOLD OF HIS RELATIONS WITH WEIZMAN, WHO WAS A "FRIEND." YET, ISRAELIS WERE BEING VERY DIFFICULT AND WHY DID BEGIN ENCOURAGE SADAT AND THE EGYPTIAN PEOPLE EARLY ON, ONLY TO LET 4,000 SETTLERS NEAR RAFAI OBSTRUCT FUTURE PEACE? HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE WEST BANK AND THE PALESTINIAN ISSUES WERE MAIN PROBLEMS, IMPLYING THAT OTHER MATTERS COULD BE WORKED OUT, EVEN WITH ARAFAT. A RATHER AWKWARD MOMENT IN THE DIALOGUE TOOK PLACE AS THE CONGRESSMAN TOLD GAMASY THAT SURELY HE COULD UNDERSTAND THE AMERICAN REACTION TO

PLO TERRORISM. GAMASY REPLIED, GETTING MORE DIRECT AND FORECFUL, THAT U.S. PRESS DOES NOT GIVE FAIR COVERAGE. WHY HAD ISRAELIS PRE-EMPTED AND STRUCK A TOWN IN SOUTH LEBANON RECENTLY ONLY ON BASIS THAT SOME ACTIVITY MIGHT BE LAUNCHED FROM THERE? IN FACT, THERE HAD BEEN NO PROVOCATION. WHY HADN'T U.S. PRESS SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THAT? A DISTORTED PICTURE EMERGED.

7. COMMENT: MEETING WENT VERY WELL. GAMASY WAS IN A GOOD MOOD, WARM FRIENDLY. THE MAIN ITEMS OF INTEREST WERE MR. LEGGETT'S PROPOSAL FOR SOMALIA AND GAMASY'S CONCERN THAT SOVIETS WOULD MOVE (POLITICALLY, IN SOME MANNER) AGAINST EGYPT BEFORE 1980. CODEL SEEMED PLEASED BY THE VISIT AND COMMENTED MOST FAVORABLY
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ON GEN GAMASY'S PROFESSIONALISM, DIRECTNESS, AND WARMTH TOWARD AMERICANS. EILTS

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